

IGF Dynamic Coalitions & the Sustainable Development Goals

◆ DC on Innovative Approaches to Connecting the Unconnected

The Dynamic Coalition on Innovative Approaches to Connecting the Unconnected seeks to collect and disseminate information about innovative technological and business practices that help provide last mile connectivity as well as explore various supply and demand side drivers of adoption in unconnected communities. Our case studies and project database tie directly to the ways in which the ICT-led interventions enable the UN Sustainable Development goals.

Our case studies span several domains: agriculture, education, health, and financial inclusion, to name a few. Each of these projects directly tie to advance one, and often more, SDGs. To provide just one such example, one of our case studies, the Vanuatu Inter-island Telemedicine and Learning Project, deploys connectivity in the remote island of Maewo in Vanuatu, to provide access to critical healthcare. SDG 3 seeks to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.” Having access to healthcare is imperative to a healthy life. ICTs can facilitate access to doctors. Expertise-strapped island nations like Vanuatu can more equitably serve their populations by utilising telemedicine services through the VITAL network. Patients treated using the VITAL network ranged from 5 months to 75 years in age, really representing health “for all at all ages.” Other project case studies advance access to digital skills training both inside and outside the classroom, advancing SDG 4, and means to provide training for women (SDG 5) to become entrepreneurs (SDG 8) and access to better farming practices and prices (SDG 2).

More broadly, our work seeks to advance and strengthen partnerships that seek to use ICTs for SDGs. We have played an active part in the IGF’s Connecting and Enabling the Next Billions Effort, contributed in the last three years to the Best Practices Forum on Gender and Access, participated in working groups part of the Internet Inclusion Initiative (IEEE) and the World Economic Forum’s Internet for All. We have contributed research to the EQUALS Working Group on Access, and on the ground, worked with companies and community-led organizations in Rwanda, Nepal and Vanuatu. SDG 17 aims to “strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.” The work that we participate in is a true example of a multi-stakeholder partnership that transversed boundaries. Our projects database now spans 1029 projects in over 151 countries, and we have developed case studies through 111 interviews in over 50 countries.